



## Ghost & Goblins

Let's just cut to the chase

As we prepare to enter negotiations for the 2023-24 school year, I want to share some significant information with you.

We have heard from members that additional teacher planning days are needed. OEA will be strongly advocating for additional teacher planning time in the coming negotiations; however, district administration has made it very clear that they are watching the attendance on Teacher Planning and Professional Development days and will not grant future days based on the current trend of absences.

There are two such days scheduled for next week: October 31 and November 1, and I urge you to use those days according to the contract and calendar for PD and Teacher Planning.

As a teacher myself, I understand the lure of taking leave on nonstudent days to fulfill medical and other appointments. You may have the desire to avoid the need for a substitute or for a colleague to have to take on your classes; however, we cannot advocate for more teacher planning time if educators are not taking advantage of the planning time that is already provided to them. *And please remember that it is the district's responsibility – not yours – to secure a substitute when*

*necessary.*

I urge you to consider the long-term value of being in attendance during nonstudent days.

**Professional Development:** Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>, you are cordially invited to attend the final workshop presented by the Educational Rights Counsel and the OEA to learn how to advocate not only for students but yourself in these tough times. You may register by following this link: [Protecting Your Students: Successful Advocacy in Tough Times](#). The workshop is free to attend and open to both OEA member and nonmembers. The OEA will be providing a light breakfast.

**Pinball Wizard:** Come out to Beercade (6104 Maple St, Omaha, NE 68104) on Friday, October 28, 2022, from 4:00pm until 6:00pm for fun and social interaction. Show me your OEA membership number and I will provide you with tokens to show your skills on classic old school along with the new hip video games. Who doesn't want to master the Pac Man board or conquer Donkey Kong? The goal of the event is to just socialize, decompress from the week, and build camaraderie among members.

**20,000 Villagers:** Over the last couple of years, Omaha Public Schools has made the concerted effort to make sure our students have what they need during the cold months of the year (hats, gloves, coats). Ms. Lisa Utterback has requested that I share this with you in the hopes that you will participate. Follow the provided link to donate to this great cause ([20,000 Villagers](#)). The district has set a goal of assisting 20,000 students. Let's help make that happen.

**Inclement Weather:** The coveted snow day is something our students and teachers will no longer experience. It will be a synchronous learning day. In the event of a "snow day" or inclement weather day, students will log in for remote learning. Middle and High school teachers will start classes at

9:10am and conclude at 11:05am. Live office hours will be from 11:05 until 12:00pm. Classes will be 25 minutes in length. Elementary classes will start at 9:00am. ELA will take place from 9:15 until 9:45am. Math will take place from 9:45am until 10:00am followed by live office hours until 11:00am. Teacher planning and prep will occur for all grade levels in the afternoon.

As we enter these "holiday" months of the year, it is not always easy to be festive and fun. The stress to make sure everything is done, purchased, cooked seems to be greater than normal. I encourage you to take the time to do what you need to do to ease that stress and take a night or two and the weekend off from school. Thank you for all you have done, are doing, and will continue to do.

In Solidarity,  
Michelle

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